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Viewing cable 07MANAGUA1021, ANOTHER CONVERGENCIA MEMBER QUESTIONS ORTEGA,S

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- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07MANAGUA1021	2007-04-23 14:34	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 001021

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SUBJECT: ANOTHER CONVERGENCIA MEMBER QUESTIONS ORTEGA,S
INTENTIONS AND COMMITMENT TO CAMPAIGN PROMISES

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

¶1. (C) Summary: Azucena Ferrey, a former Contra and longstanding Christian Democrat currently associated with Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) political ally Convergencia, tells us that a number of Convergencia members are disillusioned with the Ortega administration. Ferrey, who directs the City of Managua's Women's Affairs Office, also noted that divisions within the FSLN are increasing, and some Sandinista militants reject President Ortega's hermetic, autocratic style of governance. Ferrey is one of the eight beneficiaries of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission's (IAHCR) recent resolution in favor of the Nicaraguan Human Rights Center's petition concerning electoral fraud committed in 1996. She intends to use the IAHCR decision as a platform to advocate for electoral reform and the depoliticization of Nicaragua's Supreme Electoral Council. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On April 17, PolCouns lunched with Azucena Ferrey, Director of City of Managua's Women's Affairs Office. Ferrey, who is a former Contra and longstanding Christian Democrat is now associated with Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) political ally Convergencia. She was a National Assembly deputy with Violeta Chamorro's UNO from 1990-1995. Ferrey was recently interviewed by the media regarding the IAHRC's recent resolution in favor of the Nicaraguan Human Rights Center's (CENIDH) petition concerning electoral fraud committed in 1996. Ferrey and seven other candidates competing in the 1996 National Assembly elections claimed that the Supreme Electoral Council's (CSE) manipulation of a complex formula for vote tally remainders caused them to lose their seats to other candidates representing the FSLN and the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC), the two parties controlling the CSE.

¶3. (SBU) Ferrey explained that the CENIDH filed the petition on behalf of the eight candidates over ten years ago. The Commission reached a decision in October 2006, but decided to delay its release until after Nicaragua's November 2006 national elections to avoid politicizing the process. She reported that the IAHCR decision (Resolution 11,878, dated 16 March 2007) will be included in the body's annual report. While Ferrey does not expect the decision will enable her to gain an Assembly seat, she intends to use the resolution as a launching point to advocate for electoral reform and the depoliticization of the CSE.

¶4. (C) Ferrey confirmed her recent comments to the press that she suspects the FSLN-PLC "pact" controlling the CSE also finagled some results of the November 2006 Assembly

elections to favor the PLC and FSLN in detriment of Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) and the Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) candidates. The fact that the CSE has declined to release the final election results feeds this suspicion, asserted Ferrey. (Note: Ferrey was ninth on the FSLN-Convergencia slate of Parlacen candidates for the November 2006 elections and hence did not make the cut. End Note.)

15. (C) Moving on to the subject of Convergencia and its views on the Ortega administration thus far, Ferrey commented that she and a number of other Convergencia members are quickly becoming disillusioned with Ortega, citing Christian Democrats Agustin Jarquin and Myriam Arguello, as well as Contra/Resistance leader Elida Maria Galeano ("La Chaparra") as examples. First, he has not delivered on his campaign promises to their movement, and second, they are uncomfortable with his hermetic, autocratic style of governance. Third, first lady Rosario Murillo's co-governance is "out of line" and has aggravated the divisions within the FSLN to the point that it is hurting the government's ability to function. Ferrey claimed that some Sandinista militants, especially those working in departmental and municipal government and in civil society, are also upset over Ortega's failure to deliver on his social campaign promises and apparent overreaching goal to create a family dynasty.

16. (C) Ferrey considers the public school teachers' and administrator's recent protests (septel) a trial balloon for the Ortega government. They are calling on Ortega to deliver on his campaign commitment to raise their wages and living standards. If he does not address their demands, his entire

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"social project" will come into question, she warned.

17. (C) Responding to PolCouns' remark that Ortega, likely with the support of PLC leader/convicted money launder Arnoldo Aleman, will attempt to postpone Nicaragua's November 2008 municipal elections, Ferrey was unequivocal -- Ortega intends to delay the municipal elections to buy time and gain more support. The Sandinistas know that if elections were held today, they would lose Managua, she explained, basing her assessment on what she hears from her FSLN colleagues.

18. (C) In Ferrey's view, another area of concern is Ortega's treatment of Cardinal Obando y Bravo, a close friend. Ferrey mentioned she had met with Obando the previous day and he had shared his frustration over Ortega's delay in issuing a presidential decree formalizing his appointment as director of the new Peace and Reconciliation Council. Reportedly, Obando had also complained that the Council is penniless and inoperable. (Comment: Ferrey defended Obando's decision to support Ortega, asserting that Ortega had "rescued" Obando from then-President Aleman's personal attacks against him and claiming that he has "curbed" Ortega's extremist inclinations.)

Bio

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19. (SBU) Maria Azucena FERREY Echaverry was born in Granada, Nicaragua on June 2, 1945. She studied business administration at Nicaragua's National Autonomous University (UNAN), joined the Social Christian Unity party in the 1950s. An active opponent of the Somoza regime, Ferrey became disillusioned with the Sandinista revolution, joined the Contra movement, and then moved to Miami in 1987 where she became one of the movement's political leaders in exile. She was a member of the National Assembly under Violeta Chamorro's UNO alliance and ran for re-election under a Christian Democrat alliance in 1995, but lost, allegedly because of the CSE's manipulation of the vote tally. Before serving as the city's Director of Women's Affairs, Ferrey was Managua's External Relations Director. She is a founding

member of a number of women's organizations, including the Nicaraguan Women's Foundation, and the Nicaraguan Women's Alliance. Ferrey has one son, Carlos Alfredo Montealegre Ferrey, born in 1974.

Comment

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¶10. (C) Ferrey's views on the Ortega administration track with what we are hearing from other Convergencia members, such as Jarquin, Galeano, and Arguello. Whether or not they act on their discontent is another matter, especially since some of them appear to be more driven by narrow, personal interests than broader social or political concerns.

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